AMENDMENT

In the Specification:

On page 1 in the specification, please amend the first paragraph, lines 6-8 as follows:

This application is a divisional of U.S. Utility Application No. 09/848,370, filed 4 May 2001, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/202,201, filed 5 May 2000, naming Shawn R. Feaster, Richard K. Gordon, and Bhupendra P. Doctor as inventors, ~~which is~~ both of which are herein incorporated by reference.

Please amend the first full paragraph on page 25, lines 6-16, as follows:

The change in red blood cell count of a subject may also be determined as the assay of the present invention may be used to detect a change in AChE concentration of about 2%, preferably about 1.5%. *See e.g.,* Figure 17. Since about 10% to about 12% of a subject's total blood volume is removed during blood donation and the levels of AChE and red blood cells are decreased after blood donation. The assay of the present invention can be used to screen individuals to determine if they are able to donate or if they donated blood recently. Likewise, the present invention may be used to determine if a subject suffers from anemia, thalassemias, spherocytosis, hemoglobin SS, hemolytic anemia, paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria, or megaloblastic ~~aneami~~ anemia since these diseases either cause an increase or decrease in red blood cells count.

Please amend the second full paragraph on page 28, lines 8-15, as follows:

Relative to the prior art assays, the assay of the present invention is rapid, accurate, and precise. Since the assay of the present invention is fast relative to prior art assays, the present invention may be adapted for use with high-throughput screening platforms such as the ~~Biomeek~~ Biomek 2000® (Beckman Coulter, Inc, Fullerton, CA) or any other such system known in the art. The present assay does not rely on the addition of selective AChE or BChE inhibitors, employs minimally invasive sampling techniques such as pricking the subject's finger, and provides results in less than about six minutes.

Please amend the first full paragraph on page 32, lines 3-10, as follows:

A microtiter plate ~~spectophotometer~~ spectrophotometer such as Molecular Devices Spectramax Plus® microtiter plate spectrophotometer available from Molecular Devices Corporation (Sunnyvale, CA) was used. Two experiments were performed on the same plate. For the first experiment, it was indicated that it was a kinetic assay and the parameters set were: 1) 324 nm wavelength, 2) 60 second pre-read shaking, 3) 3 second shaking between reads, 4) 4 minute collection time, and 5) linear least squares data analysis. For the second experiment, it was indicated that it was an endpoint assay and the parameters set were 1) two wavelengths, 415 nm and 445 nm and 2) 5 second pre-read shaking.

Please amend the second full paragraph on page 43, lines 11-16, as follows:

16 Biorad P6® spin columns (Bio-Rad Laboratories Hercules, CA) were prepared according to the manufacture's directions. Serial dilutions of soman (GD) were prepared in saline and resulted in concentrations of 1.00×10^{-6}, 8.00×10^{-7}, 6.40×10^{-7}, 5.12×10^{-7}, 4.10×10^{-7}, 3.28×10^{-7}, 2.62×10^{-7}, 2.10×10^{-7}, 1.68×10^{-7}, 1.34×10^{-7}, 1.07×10^{-7}, 8.59×10^{-8}, and 0 M of GD.